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July 18, 2005

Marvin Krout, Director
City of Lincoln Planning Department
555 South 10th Street, Room 213
Lincoln, NE 68508

Dear Marvin:

Please find attached a list of recommendations for adjustments to the Downtown Master Plan as it relates to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. These suggestions are based on input received from some of our professional staff here on campus.

While most of the suggestions are minor and somewhat detailed, as you know a land use map creates the expectation of a particular type of future development. There have been occasions where similar detail shown in a plan has impacted our ability to develop our campuses. For example, the City's Comprehensive Plan showed a trail along Dead Man's Run through East Campus. As a result, the City required that we dedicate a trail easement as a condition of vacating the rights-of-way in the research plots. The City initially requested the easement along Dead Man's Run, although after negotiations, we settled on the route adjacent to Huntington/Leighton Avenues.

Based on our most recent campus sector study of "R" Street, endorsed by our campus administration, we would be interested in exploring these details of the downtown master plan further with city staff. We believe that both the University and City have common goals within both plans that can be accomplished. Those goals might include making the area more attractive and safe for pedestrian and bicycle traffic, maintain the maximum amount of parking to serve our students and the public and maintenance of green space that adds to the physical beauty of the campus and downtown. We would also propose maintaining our active transit system on "R" Street that allows for a safe and efficient flow of traffic and drop-off locations for passengers.

I want to personally thank you for including the University in this important endeavor. It's my understanding that the master plan has not been updated since 1973. Your recognition of the need to update the plan in coordination with the University's master plan is a true partnership. Components of the proposed plan including the promenade, civic square and insertion of many pedestrian friendly elements provide a vision for the overall picture of downtown and its contribution to the community. We especially appreciate the desire to maintain an attractive downtown because it has such an influence on our ability to recruit faculty, staff and students to a safe and welcoming environment.

Marvin Krout, Director

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If you have any questions on the suggestions attached, please don't hesitate to contact me or Michelle Waite in my office. In the meantime, we will be contacting you in the near future to visit further about the plan specifically as it relates to "R" Street.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Harvey Perlman".

Harvey Perlman
Chancellor and Harvey & Susan
Perlman Alumni Professor of Law

xc: Mayor Colleen Seng
Polly McMullen
Chris Jackson
Bill Nunez
Jennifer Dam-Shewchuk

Land Use Framework

Approximately 9 ½ blocks are shown on the land use map as “UNL Oriented Housing”. The Executive Summary describes the same areas as “UNL Housing.” This proposed land use category includes some, but not all of the Greek houses adjacent to “R” Street. The University recommends that this land use be changed for the following reasons:

- The UNL Master Plan does not contemplate expanding University housing southwest of campus.
- UNL Housing does not contemplate expanding University housing in this area.
- This identifies a housing market (e.g. faculty/staff, students, alumni) instead of a land use. Other areas designated for residential land uses do not identify markets (e.g. city/state employee related housing, restaurant/entertainment related housing)
- The land use designating Greek houses should be consistently applied, either as Education/UNL or a residential land use.

St. Mark’s-on-the-Campus church and the Nebraska Book Store should not be designated as an Education/UNL land use.

The block between 17th and 18th, “R” and “Q” Streets is owned by UNL and is anticipated for future University related use. The block will be a significant entry to the campus in the future. The land use designation should be changed from “High Density Housing” to “Education/UNL.”

The half block east of the Anderson building is owned by UNL and contemplated for future expansion of the College of Journalism. The land use should be changed from “UNL Oriented Housing” to “Education/UNL.”

The Hewitt Center is designated as a future retail land use. We would recommend that the Hewitt Center be designated as “Arts/Cultural”.

Sheldon Art Gallery should be shown as an “Arts/Cultural” land use, to be consistent with the designation for the Lied Center, Westbrook and Temple.

While the University is supportive of a parking structure on “Q” Street, there has been some continued discussion related to the benefits of the structure located on the west side of 14th between “Q” and “R” Streets in lieu of one of the sites shown on the south side of “Q” Street. A parking structure on the “Wendy’s/Culture Center” sites could be perceived to be more accessible to UNL visitors. However, the sites as shown are acceptable.

The text of the draft plan is unclear as to the role of the University in downtown. On page 39 of the plan, the document indicates that University uses should be supported and enhanced between “R” and “Q” Streets. However, the next paragraph indicates that the land use frame work “discourages campus creep” into the downtown. It states that “University expansion in downtown is adequately provided for and clearly defined.” Perhaps the text could be softened to acknowledge that the University is a major tenant in downtown (e.g. Miller and Paine and Commerce Court) and can continue to contribute to the vitality of downtown.

Transit Loop

The transit loop is shown with a route on 17th Street and “W” Street, both of which are envisioned to close in the UNL Master Plan (and in the concepts to date in the proposed Master Plan.) We would suggest adding a note to the text that the Antelope Valley roadway could provide the connection, and that the details would be resolved with UNL in the future.

Promenade

The University strongly endorsed the concept of a promenade. However, it was noted that the portion of the promenade on 11th Street, north of “Q” enters an area that is used as a service court/loading zone for the Lied Center and Westbrook buildings. Additionally, the area between Westbrook and the Lied is narrow and has a grade change. Thus, the design of the promenade north of “Q” Street may need to be different to take into consideration the safety and physical constraints of the area.

The proposed concept for design of the promenade along “R” Street is different than the results of the University’s sector study, adopted by the University and informally supported by the City. The University will be meeting with City to try to develop a concept for “R” Street that meets the goals of both entities.